

From: RACHEL JABLONKA
To: R2NYC04.R2OSWSF1.SOTO-DENISE
Date: 1/14/99 8:21am
Subject: Monroe Twp.

Denise-

I hope this is helpful. If you have any further questions, feel free to contact me at x. 3853.

Attached is the reply to Andrew's letter (Sept 22, 1998).
The reply was done by the Water Program. DRS

We learned about the PCE contamination through Andrew's letter. DRS.



Honorable Robert E. Andrews
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Andrews:

Thank you for your recent letters written on behalf of the residents of Monroe Township, County of Gloucester, New Jersey concerning the contamination of local drinking water with mercury.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is aware that the contamination of 28 private wells in Monroe Township has been confirmed, and that six additional wells have tested above the maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 2.0 ppb of mercury, but have not yet been confirmed. The EPA does not have any funding programs authorized to provide funds for the medical costs for testing and treatment of individuals. However, federal funds for drinking water systems are provided to the state of New Jersey under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), through the State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan program. These funds can be used to make loans for upgrading systems to meet applicable standards, and to connect private wells to a public water system. In addition, as discussed below, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has some initiatives underway to address the concerns of your constituents.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) and NJDEP are involved in a cooperative, ongoing study of mercury contamination in the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer System. They have completed a two-year study and are currently in the process of conducting the first phase of a second study. There are a number of locations in which this second focused study can be conducted, including possibly Monroe Township. For more information on this investigation, please have your constituents contact Eric Evenson of the USGS at (609) 771-3900 or Dr. Eileen Murphy, NJDEP, Division of Science and Research at (609) 984-6070.

The potable well contamination in Monroe Township is currently being responded to by local, county, and state agencies, including the Monroe Township Municipal Utilities Authority (MUA), the Gloucester County Department of Health (DOH), and the NJDEP. Water lines have been extended to part of the affected area by the Monroe Township MUA. Point-of-entry-treatment (POET) systems for the removal of mercury are being installed in homes where water lines are unavailable at this time. The POET systems are being funded by

the NJDEP through the New Jersey Spill Compensation Fund. Long-term alternative water supply options are being evaluated by NJDEP, but cannot be finalized until sampling and delineation of the extent of contamination is completed. The Gloucester County DOH continues to sample potable wells in the area and expects to complete sampling by about the end of January.

NJDEP is considering other funding options for providing an alternative water supply to the affected communities including grants from bond appropriations or the corporate business tax, or loans from the SRF. For more information on the use of bonds or the corporate business tax, please have your constituents contact Bob Gallagher, NJDEP, Bureau of Site Management, at (609) 633-9284. As discussed above, the SRF loan program has provisions to allow for funding of private wells to be hooked up to an established public water system when well contamination occurs. Public or private community water systems can apply for this type of funding in order to extend water lines to the affected area. For further information on obtaining possible funding for this purpose, please have your constituents contact Phil Royer of the NJDEP at (609) 292-5550.

If you have any further questions or need additional information, please let me know or have your staff contact Peter B. Brandt, Chief of our Intergovernmental Affairs Branch, at (212) 637-3657.

Sincerely,

Jeanne M. Fox
Regional Administrator

cc: Robert C. Shinn, Jr., Commissioner, NJDEP
Eileen Murphy, Ph.D., NJDEP
Bob Gallagher, NJDEP
Phil Royer, NJDEP
Eric Evenson, USGS

bcc: Kathleen Callahan, 2DEPP
Kevin Bricke, 2DEPP-DD
Mario DelVicario, DEPP-CEPB
Benita Best-Wong, DEPP-CEPB
Rachel Jablonka, DEPP-CEPB

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